



**Mobile Bay National Estuary Program
Community Resources Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 10, 2020
Virtual Meeting through Zoom**



Attendees:

Carol Adams-Davis, Mobile Sierra Club
Mark Berte, Alabama Coastal Foundation
Casi Callaway, Mobile Baykeeper
Walter Ernest, Pelican Coast Conservancy
Debi Foster, Dog River Clearwater Revival/The Peninsula

Vickii Howell, M.O.V.E
Nicole Love, Alabama Audubon
Tammy Monistere, Conservation Alabama
Angela Underwood, ADCNR/Weeks Bay NERR

MBNEP Staff: Herndon Graddick, Tom Herder, Bethany Hudson

Meeting Takeaways:

- 1) Casi Callaway reviewed progress of the Branding discussion falling under the Create a Clean Water Future umbrella related to trash abatement activities.**
- 2) MBNEP's Herndon Graddick provided an update of WKRK production of a Truck Bed Trash Design competition being shot this week.**
- 2) Goals/Objectives/Actions were developed for CRC Work Sub-Component #4 Policy.**
- 3) Database development discussion led to development of additional Work Plan Objectives, and will be developed by MBNEP personnel in a Microsoft Excel format.**
- 4) A tentative CRC meeting schedule was developed for 2021.**

Minutes

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 pm by CRC Co-Chair Walter Ernest. Participating CRC members currently on the video call were acknowledged.

2. Approval of the Minutes

Walter called for a motion to approve the minutes from the September 30, 2020 meeting. Mark Berte provided the motion, which was seconded by Nicole Love. The motion carried.

3. Old Business

Branding Discussion Update: Casi Callaway reviewed progress of an ongoing branding discussion being facilitated by Mobile Baykeeper. She noted delays related to vacations and hurricanes, but reported a productive meeting on November 6. She "teased" about three potential ideas (holding back an unveiling until later). She explained they involve three different taglines – one for an overall anti-litter branding campaign falling under the established "umbrella" of Create a Clean Water Future and offshoots of that line, perhaps putting litter in a trash can or other messages. Eight or nine partners were on the November 6 call, including Dog River Clearwater Revival, the Alabama Coastal Foundation, Mobile Baykeeper, Groundworks Mobile, the Downtown Alliance, Keep Mobile Beautiful, the City of Mobile, Mobile County, and the MBNEP. One more meeting will be held on Friday, November 13, to vet the ideas before they are unveiled.

Truck Bed Trash Can Competition and Production. Herndon Graddick reported that this week, WKRG will be shooting the Truck Bed Trash Can Design competition, funded through an EPA Trash Free Waters Grant, with partners including Partners for Environmental Progress, DRCR, and Baykeeper, to reduce litter in the Dog River Watershed. Shooting was expected a couple weeks ago, but WKRG anchor and host Devon Walsh lost her mother and some COVID-related issues delayed it. He reported they will shoot on Thursday, and sponsors include Mitsubishi of Mobile, Felix's, the Bluegill, Osprey Initiative, Thompson Engineering, and McAleer's Furniture. It will take a few days to edit, and distribution/production details are under development. The contest will have a Shark Tank feel, with a several design videos presented by the inventors whittled down to three and judged by Don Bates of Osprey; Hunter Adams, an IP attorney; Thomas Nelson, a business professor at South; Bailey Duos, someone who's won this sort of competition to start her own local business; and Rene Kennemer of Thompson Engineering.

4. New Business:

Refinement of CRC Trash Abatement Work Plan Items. Casi reported having edited the Work Plan under development and will share it with the CRC. She displayed the document, which is organized along the Work Plan's seven subcomponent's goals and objectives, with only Subcomponents #4 (Policy) and #7 Behavior Changes, yet to be developed/refined. Leaders for subcomponent #7 were not present, so she anticipated we would finish #4, Policy, today. She mentioned a potential duration of the Work Plan from one year to through the duration of the current five-year CCMP.

The screen was turned over to Tammy Monistere of Conservation Alabama, which is concerned with policy. Tammy shared the screen and noted that CA isn't doing all of these things listed, but she didn't want to miss anything happening. She first presented Objective a, "Closely monitor bills introduced in local, state, and national legislature." She noted CA doesn't actually monitor national initiatives, but they have partners that do. Most of their attention is directed at defending against state bills limiting municipal control of trash and single use initiatives, thus, Activity i., "Defense against Statewide bills that would limit municipal control of trash/single use items. She noted the bill introduced in 2019 which was not passed, and she acknowledged advocating for Margie Wilcox's bill to increase penalties and expand the scope of what is considered litter. Tammy doesn't anticipate another pro-active bill arising in the next couple years. Tom Herder suggested increased coordination with MBNEP's Government Networks Committee. More discussion ensued related to initiating pro-action Statewide. Action ii involves tracing bills regulating single-use plastic, litter, and recycling in municipalities throughout Alabama and other states that can be used as templates for Coastal Alabama.

Tammy referred to Objective b, "Pass proactive bills at the local level." She alluded to Action i., "Post and maintain trash cans in parking lots based on parking spaces," and moved on to Action ii, "Banning/Reducing single use plastics," with Action ii 1., "Work toward ban on single use plastics in Mobile County." A correction was offered to supplant Mobile County (which was preferred, but less likely) with City of Mobile, a

"at least one municipality in Baldwin County." There was general consensus in agreement. Tammy added Action ii, accordingly. The discussion turned to the City of Mobile's proposed UDC, which was characterized as not moving forward directly, or even "dead on the van." There was some discussion of when regulations for parking lot trash cans originated and whether or not they were enforced. This discussion resulted in changes related to the UDC and City plans.

Moving to Objective c, "Advocate for funding to support litter removal/abatement and recycling opportunities." The first Action, i, related to RESTORE funding, and no one seemed to know if any such funding has been used for trash abatement initiatives, but there is the potential to require trash abatement initiatives are employed or required by large federal grants. A suggestion was made to make the objective broader, to include litter prevention, removal, and abatement in large federal grant opportunities. This

objective will be modified accordingly. Similarly, low impact development requirements were discussed, but LID does not generally apply to trash abatement. The revision is broad enough to allow us to “connect more dots” between LID and trash abatement. The CRC has the opportunity to comment on proposed components, including trash abatement (or LID) initiatives, in specific projects.

Action ii is “Agencies to be fully funded at State and local level,” with one suggestion the ADEM scrap tire recycling program. A question was raised about advocacy for funding municipalities or agencies for recycling and other trash abatement initiatives. “Statewide or local?” was a response. Statewide programs are intended to fund local work, and the ADEM scrap tire recycling program was discussed and touted. However, the State apparently took the revenue from that fund and placed in in the State’s general fund, and no laws preclude this happening. Suggestions for protecting these funds were discussed. The State legislature has great flexibility in “robbing Peter to pay Paul.” So Action ii. 1., became “Reevaluate the ADEM Scrap Tire Recycling Program to ensure funds are being spent on tire recycling.”

The discussion progressed to Action iii. “Grants to fund the local work.” Tammy asked, what goals are related to provision of funds to municipalities? It seemed that good programs, like recycling, are quick to suffer when challenges, like storms, occur. Recent City of Mobile reactions to Hurricane Sally were discussed. Alabama Recycling Fund Grants? Tammy suggested researching how those who have had success had responded and developing a template for coastal cities. The benefits of local material recovery facilities (MRFs) were expressed, Action iii and Sub-Action 1 (Alabama Recycling Fund grants) was endorsed, and RESTORE was suggested as a funding source. Some research will be necessary and was suggested as a preliminary activity (which may may be included under Objective a.).

The Work Plan will be shared to ensure any additions/changes/deletions were not omitted. A suggestion was made to add Sub-Action b. i. 3. “Enforcement of litter laws under municipal policies.” Another suggestion was to include Baldwin County in Sub-Action b. i. 3. The Work Plan will be amended to reflect changes to Sub-Component 4, Policy. We’ll get on #7 Behavior Changes next time. In trying to develop a Database, confusion was expressed over Ditch the Disposables and whether or not the appropriate Sub-Component is Behavior Changes. This component was addressed and compared to others, including awareness. Its applicability to being a specific Sub-Component of the Work Plan. It was decided to leave it to do later, as we proceed to implement the Work Plan, until appropriate guidance and those who introduced this idea can provide guidance. Some guidance was offered related getting that guidance and

Consideration of Trash Abatement Activities and Metrics in Database Development. Tom Herder introduced the vision for an Excel-based database, and provided a list of the MBNEP trash abatement initiatives introduced in the August meeting. He discussed some of the projects, initially related to trash removal, and some of the attributes the Database would contain. For each of the projects, he attempted to classify projects and project components by CRC Work Plan. Again, he expressed uncertainly about Ditch the Disposables, suggesting it to be related to Behavior Change. Some guidance was provided related to where encouraging changes in business practices might better fall in the Work Plan. Alternately, Litter Prevention was suggested, and perhaps a new Objective should be added, maybe reductions in utilization of single use items (with a mind towards the difference between recyclables and disposables. An Action iv. “Track number of restaurants/businesses who stop using single-use items.” CRC members expressed approval for this addition. Additionally, an Action v. was suggested to “Track behavior change of individuals targeted through Green Team effort for City employees (behavior change?).” Casi requested that Tom share the Work Plan, which she will edit and refine, with Roberta, and he indicated he would.

Jennifer Denson’s PEP Request for Statistics Related to Truck Bed Trash. Tom Herder shared an email from Jennifer Denson requesting data or statistics specifically related to truck bed trash on roadways and in waters. Acknowledging the value of such data, no CRC participants were aware if any existed.

Development of tentative 2021 CRC Meeting Schedule. Casi suggested more but shorter meetings, and Tom suggested every other month, beginning in January. It was suggested that the first meeting be of a longer duration, perhaps 90 minutes to two hours, with most monthly meetings only an hour in duration. We agreed upon six bi-monthly meetings (January, March, May, July, September, and November) with a longer meeting in January and perhaps in July. Membership agreed the third Tuesday of these months was better, from 1:00 pm until 2:00 or (2:30/3:00 pm) for the longer meetings.

5. Adjourn The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 pm.